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ARMINE AND ELVIRA.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]

ARMINE AND ELVIRA,

A

LEGENDARY TALE.

IN TWO PARTS.

I. and J. Taylor del. et sculp.

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M.DCC.LXXI.

ARMINE AND ELVIRA.

PART I.

A Hermit on the Banks of *Trent*,
Far from the World's bewildering Maze,
To humbler Scenes of calm Content
Had fled from brighter, buſier Days.

If haply from his guarded Breaſt
Should ſteal the unſuſpected Sigh,
And Memory, an unbidden Gueſt,
With former Paſſions fill'd his Eye;

Then pious Hope and Duty prais'd
The Wiſdom of th' unerring Sway;
And while his Eye to Heaven he rais'd,
Its ſilent Waters ſunk away.

Life's gayer Enſigns once he bore—
Ah! what avails the mournful Tale?
Suffice it, when the Scene was o'er,
He fled to the ſequeſter'd Vale.

" What tho' the Joys I lov'd ſo well,
" The Charms, he cry'd, that Youth has known,
" Fly from the Hermit's lonely Cell!
" Yet is not ARMINE ſtill my own?

" Yes, ARMINE, yes, thou valued Youth!
" 'Midſt every Grief thou ſtill art mine!
" Dear Pledge of *Winifreda*'s Truth,
" And Solace of my Life's Decline!

" Tho'

" Tho' from the World and worldly Care
" My weary'd Mind I mean to free,
" Yet ev'ry Hour that Heav'n can ſpare,
" My ARMINE, I devote to thee.

" And ſure that Heaven my Hopes ſhall bleſs,
" And make thee fam'd for Virtues fair,
" And happy too, if Happineſs
" Depend upon a Parent's Pray'r.

" Laſt Hope of Life's departing Day,
" In whom its future Scenes I ſee!
" No truant Thought ſhall ever ſtray
" From this lone Hermitage and thee."

Thus, to his humble Fate reſign'd,
His Breaſt each anxious Care foregoes;
All but the Care of ARMINE's Mind,
The deareſt Taſk a Parent knows!

And well were all his Cares repaid;
In Armine's Breaſt each Virtue grew,
In full Maturity diſplay'd
To fond Affection's anxious View.

Nor yet neglected were the Charms,
To poliſh'd Life, that Grace impart;
Virtue, he knew, but feebly warms
'Till Science humanize the Heart.

And when he ſaw the lawleſs Train
Of paſſions in the youthful Breaſt,
He curb'd them not with rigid Rein,
But ſtrove to ſoothe them into Reſt.

" Think not my Son, in this," he cry'd,
" A Father's Precept ſhall diſpleaſe:
" No—be each Paſſion gratify'd
" That tends to Happineſs or Eaſe.

" Nor

" Nor ſhall th' ungrateful Taſk be mine
" Their native generous Warmth to blame,
" That Warmth if Reaſon's Suffrage join
" To point the Object and the Aim.

" This Suffrage wanting, know, fond Boy,
" That every Paſſion proves a Foe:
" Tho' much it deal in promis'd Joy,
" It pays, alas! in certain Woe.

" Compleat Ambition's wildeſt Scheme;
" In Power's moſt brilliant Robes appear,
" Indulge in Fortune's golden Dream;
" Then aſk thy Breaſt if Peace be there:

" No: it ſhall tell thee, Peace retires
" If once of her lov'd Friends depriv'd;
" Contentment calm, ſubdu'd Deſires,
" And Happineſs that's ſelf-deriv'd."

To temper thus the ſtronger Fires
Of Youth he ſtrove, for well he knew
Boundleſs as Thought tho' Man's Deſires,
The real Wants of Life were few.

And oft revolving in his Breaſt
Th' inſatiate Luſt of Wealth or Fame,
He, with no common Care oppreſt,
To Fortune thus would oft exclaim:

" O Fortune! at thy crouded Shrine
" What wretched Worlds of Suppliants bow!
" For ever hail'd thy Pow'r divine,
" For ever breath'd the ſerious Vow.

" With tottering Pace and feeble Knee
" See Age advance in ſhameleſs Haſte,
" The palſy'd hand is ſtretch'd to thee
" For Wealth he wants the Power to taſte.

" See

" See, led by Hope the youthful Train,
" Her fairy Dreams their Hearts have won;
" She points to what they ne'er ſhall gain,
" Or dearly gain—to be undone.

" Muſt I too form the votive Prayer,
" And wilt thou hear one Suppliant more?
" His Prayer, O Fortune, deign to hear,
" To thee who never pray'd before.

" O may one dear, one favour'd Youth,
" May ARMINE ſtill thy Pow'r diſclaim;
" Kneel only at the Shrine of Truth,
" Count Freedom Wealth, and Virtue Fame."

Lo! to his utmoſt Wiſhes bleſt
The Prayer was heard; and Freedom's Flame,
And Truth, the Sunſhine of the Breaſt,
Were ARMINE's Wealth, were ARMINE's Fame.

His

His Heart no ſelfiſh Cares confin'd,
  He felt for all that feel Diſtreſs,
And, ſtill benevolent and kind,
  He bleſt them, or he wiſh'd to bleſs.

For what tho' Fortune's Frown deny
  With Wealth to bid the Sufferer live?
Yet Pity's Hand can oft ſupply
  A Balm ſhe never knew to give:

Can oft with lenient Drops aſſwage
  The Wounds no ruder Hand can heal,
When Grief, Deſpair, Diſtraction rage,
  While Death the Lips of Love ſhall ſeal.

Ah then, his Anguiſh to remove,
  Depriv'd of all his Heart holds dear,
How ſweet the ſtill ſurviving Love
  Of Friendſhip's Smile, of Pity's Tear!

This

This knew the Sire: he oft would cry,
" From theſe, my Son, O ne'er depart!
" Theſe tender Charities, that tye
" In mutual League the human Heart.

" Be thine thoſe Feelings of the Mind
" That wake at Honour's, Friendſhip's Call;
" Benevolence, that unconfin'd
" Extends her liberal Hand to all.

" By Sympathy's untutor'd Voice
" Be taught her ſocial Laws to keep;
" Rejoice if human Heart rejoice,
" And weep if human Eye ſhall weep.

" The Heart that bleeds for others Woes,
" Shall feel each ſelfiſh Sorrow leſs;
" His Breaſt, who Happineſs beſtows,
" Reflected Happineſs ſhall bleſs.

" Each ruder Paſſion tho' withſtood
" That breaks o'er Virtue's ſober Line,
" The Tender, Noble, and the Good
" To cheriſh and indulge be thine.

" And yet, my ARMINE, might I name
" One Paſſion as a dangerous Gueſt;
" Well may'ſt thou wonder when I blame
" The Tendereſt, Nobleſt, and the Beſt.

" Nature, 'tis true, with Love deſign'd
" To ſmooth the Race our Fathers ran,
" The Savage of the human Kind
" By Love was ſoften'd into Man.

" As feels the Ore the ſearching Fire,
" Expanding and refining too,
" So fairer glow'd each fair Deſire,
" Each gentle Thought ſo gentler grew.

" How

" How chang'd, alas! thoſe happier Days!
" A Train how different now ſucceeds!
" While ſordid Avarice betrays,
" Or empty Vanity miſleads.

" Fled from the Heart each nobler Gueſt,
" Each genuine Feeling we forego;
" What Nature planted in the Breaſt,
" The Flowers of Love are Weeds of Woe.

" Hence all the Pangs the Heart muſt feel
" Between contending Paſſions toſt,
" Wild Jealouſy's avenging Steel,
" And Life and Fame and Virtue loſt!

" Yet falling Life, yet fading Fame,
" Compar'd to what his Heart annoy
" Who cheriſhes a hopeleſs Flame,
" Are Terms of Happineſs and Joy.

" Ah then the ſoft Contagion fly!
" And timely ſhun th' alluring Bait!"
The riſing Bluſh, the downcaſt Eye
Proclaim'd — The Precept was too late.

The End of the firſt Part.

ARMINE AND ELVIRA.

PART II.

DEEP in the Boſom of a Wood,
Where Art had form'd the moted Iſle,
An antique Caſtle towering ſtood,
In gothic Grandeur roſe the Pile.

Here RAYMOND, long in Arms renown'd,
From Scenes of War would oft repair;
His Bed an only Daughter crown'd,
And ſmil'd away a Father's Care.

By

By Nature's happieſt Pencil drawn,
She wore the vernal Morning's Ray:
The vernal Morning's bluſhing Dawn
Breaks not ſo beauteous into Day.

Her Breaſt, impatient of Controul,
Scorn'd in its ſilken Chains to lye,
And the ſoft Language of the Soul
Flow'd from her never ſilent Eye.

The Bloom that open'd on her Face
Well ſeem'd an Emblem of her Mind,
Where ſnowy Innocence we trace,
With bluſhing Modeſty combin'd.

To theſe reſiſtleſs Grace impart
That Look of Sweetneſs form'd to pleaſe,
That Elegance, devoid of Art,
That Dignity that's loſt in Eaſe.

What

What Youth ſo cold could view unmov'd
The Maid that every Beauty ſhar'd?
Her ARMINE ſaw, he ſaw, he lov'd,
He lov'd—alas! and he deſpair'd!

Unhappy Youth! he ſunk oppreſt;
For much he labour'd to conceal
That gentleſt Paſſion of the breaſt,
Which ALL can feign, but FEW can feel.

Ingenuous Fears ſuppreſt the Flame,
Yet ſtill he own'd its hidden Power;
With Tranſport dwelling on her Name,
He ſooth'd the ſolitary Hour.

" How long, he cry'd, muſt I conceal
" What yet my Heart could wiſh were known?
" How long the trueſt Paſſion feel,
" And yet that Paſſion fear to own?

" Ah

" Ah might I breathe my humble Vow!
" Might ſhe too deign to lend an Ear!
" ELVIRA's Self ſhould then allow
" That ARMINE was at leaſt ſincere.

" Wild Wiſh! to deem the matchleſs Maid
" Would liſten to a Youth like me,
" Or that my Vows could e'er perſuade,
" Sincere and conſtant tho' they be!

" Ah what avail my Love or Truth?
" She liſtens to no lowly Swain;
" Her Charms muſt bleſs ſome happier Youth,
" Some Youth of Fortune's titled Train.

" Then go, fallacious Hope! adieu!
" The flattering Proſpect I reſign;
" And bear from my deluded View
" The Bliſs that never muſt be mine!

" Yet

" Yet will the Youth, whoe'er he be,
" In Truth or Tenderneſs excell?
" Or will he on thy Charms like me
" With Fondneſs never dying dwell?

" Will he with thine his Hopes unite?
" With ready Zeal thy Joys improve?
" With fond Attention and Delight
" Each Wiſh prevent, each Fear remove?

" Will he, ſtill faithful to thy Charms,
" For conſtant Love be long rever'd?
" Nor quit that Heaven within thy Arms
" By every tender Tie endear'd?

" What tho' his boaſtful Heart be vain
" Of all that Birth or Fortune gave?
" Yet is not mine, tho' rude and plain,
" At leaſt as noble and as brave?

" Then be it's gentle Suit preferr'd!
" It's tender Sighs ELVIRA hear!
" In vain—I ſigh—but ſigh unheard;
" Unpitied falls this lonely Tear!"

Twice twelve revolving Moons had paſt,
Since firſt he caught the fatal View;
Unchang'd by Time his Sorrows laſt,
Uncheer'd by Hope his Paſſion grew.

That Paſſion to indulge, he ſought
In RAYMOND's Groves the deepeſt Shade,
There Fancy's haunting Spirit brought
The Image of his long-lov'd Maid.

But hark! what more than mortal Sound
Steals on Attention's raptur'd Ear!
The Voice of Harmony around
Swells in wild Whiſpers ſoft and clear.

Can human Hand a Tone ſo fine
Sweep from the String with Touch prophane?
Can human Lip with Breath divine
Pour on the Gale ſo ſweet a Strain?

'Tis She—the Source of ARMINE's Woe—
'Tis She—whence all his Joy muſt ſpring—
From her lov'd Lips the Numbers flow
Her magic Hand awakes the String.

Now, ARMINE, now thy Love proclaim,
Thy inſtant Suit the Time demands;
Delay not—Tumult ſhakes his Frame!
And loſt in Extacy he ſtands!

What Magic chains thee to the Ground?
What Star malignant rules the Hour,
That thus in fixt Delirium drown'd,
Each Senſe intranc'd hath loſt its Pow'r.

The Trance diſpel! awake, ariſe!
Speak what untutor'd Love inſpires!
The Moment's paſt—thy wild ſurprize
She ſees, nor unalarm'd retires.

" Stay, ſweet Illuſion! ſtay thy Flight!
" 'Tis gone!—ELVIRA's Form it wore—
" Yet one more Glimpſe of ſhort Delight!
" 'Tis gone! to be beheld no more!

" Fly, loitering Feet! the Charm perſue
" That plays upon my Hopes and Fears!
" Hah!—no Illuſion mocks my View!
" 'Tis She—ELVIRA's Self appears!

" And ſhall I on her Steps intrude?
" Alarm her in theſe lonely Shades?
" O ſtay, fair Nymph! no Ruffian rude
" With baſe Intent your Walk invades.

" Far

" Far gentler Thoughts"—his faultering Tongue
By humble Diffidence reſtrain'd,
Paus'd in Suſpence—but thus ere long,
As Love impell'd, its Power regain'd:

" Far gentler Thoughts that Form inſpires;
" With me far gentler Paſſions dwell;
" This Heart hides only blameleſs Fires,
" Yet burns with what it fears to tell.

" The faultering Voice that Fears controul,
" Bluſhes that inward Fires declare,
" Each tender Tumult of the Soul
" In Silence owns ELVIRA there."

He ſaid: and as the trembling Dove
Sent forth t'explore the watery Plain,
Soon fear'd her Flight might fatal prove,
And ſudden ſought her Ark again;

His

His Heart recoil'd; as one that rued
What he too haſtily confeſt,
And all the riſing Soul ſubdued
Sought Refuge in his inmoſt Breaſt.

The tender Strife ELVIRA ſaw
Diſtreſt; and as ſome Parent mild,
When arm'd with Words and Looks of Awe,
Melts o'er the Terrors of her Child,

Reproof prepar'd and angry Fear
In ſoft Senſations died away,
They felt the Force of ARMINE's Tear,
And fled from Pity's riſing Sway.

" That mournful Voice, that modeſt Air,
" Young Stranger, ſpeak the courteous Breaſt,
" Then why to theſe rude Scenes repair,
" Of Shades the ſolitary Gueſt?

" And

" And who is ſhe whoſe Fortunes bear
" ELVIRA's melancholy Name?
" O may thoſe Fortunes prove more fair,
" Than hers who ſadly owns the ſame.

" Ah, gentle Maid, in mine ſurvey
" A Heart, he cries, that's yours alone!
" Long has it own'd ELVIRA's Sway,
" Tho' long unnotic'd and unknown.

" On SHERWOOD's old heroic Plain
" ELVIRA grac'd the feſtal Day,
" There, foremoſt of the youthful Train,
" Her ARMINE bore the Prize away.

" There firſt that Form my Eyes ſurvey'd,
" With future Hopes that fill'd my Heart;
" But ah! beneath that Frown they fade—
" Depart, vain vanquiſh'd Hopes depart."

He

He ſaid; and on the Ground his Eyes
Were fixt abaſh'd: Th' attentive Maid,
Loſt in the Tumult of Surprize,
The well-remember'd Youth ſurvey'd.

The tranſient Colour went and came,
The ſtruggling Boſom ſunk and roſe,
The trembling Tumults of her Frame
The ſtrong conflicting Soul diſcloſe.

The Time, the Scene ſhe ſaw with Dread,
Like CYNTHIA ſetting, glanc'd away,
But ſcatter'd Bluſhes as ſhe fled,
Bluſhes that ſpoke a brighter Day.

A friendly Shepherd's neighbouring Shed
To paſs the live-long Night he ſought,
And Hope, the Lover's downy Bed,
A ſweeter Charm than Slumber brought.

On every Thought ELVIRA dwelt,
The tender Air, the Aſpect kind,
The Pity that he found ſhe felt,
And all the Angel in her Mind.

No ſelf-plum'd Vanity was there,
With fancy'd Conſequence elate;
Unknown to her the haughty air,
That means to ſpeak ſuperior State.

Her Brow no keen Reſentments arm,
No ſwell of empty Pride ſhe knew,
In trivial Minds that takes th' Alarm,
Should humble Love aſpire to ſue.

Such Love, by flattering Charms betray'd,
Shall yet, indignant, ſoon rebel,
And, bluſhing for the Choice he made,
Shall fly where gentler Virtues dwell.

'Tis then the Mind, from Bondage free,
And all it's former Weakneſs o'er,
Aſſerts it's native Dignity,
And ſcorns what Folly priz'd before.

The ſcanty Pane the riſing Ray
On the plain Wall in Diamonds threw,
The Lover hail'd the welcome Day,
And to his favorite Scene he flew.

There ſoon ELVIRA bent her Way,
Where long her lonely Walks had been,
Nor leſs had the preceding Day,
Nor ARMINE leſs endear'd the Scene.

Oft, as ſhe paſs'd, her riſing Heart
It's ſtronger Tenderneſs confeſs'd,
And oft ſhe linger'd to impart
To ſome ſafe Shade her ſecret Breaſt.

" How

" How ſlow the heavy Hours advance,
She cry'd, " ſince that eventful Day,
" When firſt I caught the fatal Glance,
" That ſtole me from myſelf away!

" Ah, Youth belov'd, tho' low thy Birth,
" The noble Air, the manly Grace,
" That Look that ſpeaks ſuperior Worth
" Can Faſhion, Folly, Fear eraſe?

" Yet ſure from no ignoble Stem
" Thy Lineage ſprings, tho' now unknown:
" The World cenſorious may condemn,
" But, ARMINE, I am thine alone.

" To Splendor only do we live?
" Muſt Pomp alone our Thoughts employ?
" All, all that Pomp and Splendor give
" Is dearly bought with Love and Joy!

" But oh — the favour'd Youth appears —
" In penſive Grief he ſeems to move:
" My Heart forebodes unnumber'd fears;
" Support it Pity, Virtue, Love!

" Hither his Footſteps ſeem to bend —
" Come, Reſolution, to my Aid!
" My Breaſt what varying Paſſions rend!
" Averſe to go — to ſtay — afraid!"

" Dear object of each fond Deſire
" That throbs tumultuous in my Breaſt!
" Why with averted Glance retire?
" At ARMINE's Preſence why diſtreſt?

" What tho' he boaſt no titled Name,
" No wide Extent of rich Domain?
" Yet muſt he feed a fruitleſs Flame,
" Muſt Truth and Nature plead in vain?"

" Think

" Think not," ſhe ſaid, " by Forms betray'd,
" To humbler Worth my Heart is blind;
" For ſoon ſhall every Splendor fade,
" That beams not from the gifted Mind.

" But firſt thy Heart explore with Care,
" With Faith it's fond Emotions prove;
" Lurks no unworthy Paſſion there?
" Prompts not Ambition bold to Love?"

" Yes, lovely Maid," the Youth replies,
" A bold Ambition prompts my Breaſt,
" The tow'ring Hope that Love ſupplies,
" The Wiſh in bleſſing to be bleſt.

" The meaner Proſpects I deſpiſe
" That Wealth, or Rank, or Power beſtow;
" Be yours the groveling Bliſs ye prize,
" Ye ſordid Minds that ſtoop ſo low!

" Be

" Be mine the more refin'd Delights
" Of Love that baniſhes Controul,
" When the fond Heart with Heart unites,
" And Soul's in Uniſon with Soul."

ELVIRA bluſh'd the warm Reply,
(To Love a Language not unknown)
The milder Glories fill'd her Eye,
And there a ſofter Luſtre ſhone.

The yielding Smile that's Half ſuppreſt,
The ſhort quick Breath, the trembling Tear,
The Swell tumultuous of the Breaſt
In ARMINE's Favour all appear.

At each kind Glance their Souls unite,
While Love's ſoft Sympathy imparts
The tender Tranſport of Delight,
That beats in undivided Hearts.

Reſpectful

Reſpectful to his Lips he preſt
Her yielded Hand; in Haſte away
Her yielded Hand ſhe drew diſtreſt;
With Looks that witneſs'd wild Diſmay.

" Ah whence, fair Excellence, thoſe Fears?
" What Terror unforeſeen alarms?"
" See! where a Father's Frown appears"—
She ſaid, and ſunk into his arms.

" My Daughter! heavens! it cannot be—
" And yet it muſt—O dire Diſgrace!
" ELVIRA have I liv'd to ſee vile
" Claſp'd in a Peaſant's wild Embrace?

" This daring Guilt let Death repay"—
His vengeful Arm the Javelin threw;
With erring Aim it wing'd its Way,
And far, by Fate averted flew.

ELVIRA breathes—her Pulſes beat,
Returning Life illumes her Eye;
Trembling, a Father's View to meet,
She ſpies a reverend Hermit nigh.

" Your Wrath, ſhe cries, let Tears aſſuage—
" Unheeded muſt ELVIRA pray?
" O let an injur'd Father's Rage
" This Hermit's ſacred Preſence ſtay!

" Yet, deem not, loſt in Guilt and Love,
" I plead to ſave my virgin Fame;
" My Weakneſs Virtue might approve,
" And ſmile on Nature's holy Flame."

" O welcome to my Hopes again,
" My Son," the raptur'd Hermit cries,
" I ſought thee ſorrowing on the Plain,"—
And all the Father fill'd his Eyes.

" Art

" Art thou, the raging RAYMOND ſaid,
" Of this audacious Boy the Sire?
" Curſe on the Dart that idly ſped,
" Nor bade his peaſant Soul expire!"

" His peaſant Soul!"—indignant Fire
Flaſh'd from the conſcious Father's Eye,
" A gallant Earl is ARMINE's Sire,
" And know, proud Chief, that Earl am I.

" Tho' here, within the Hermit's Cell,
" I long have liv'd unknown to Fame,
" Yet crouded Camps and Courts can tell—
" Thou too haſt heard of EGBERT's Name."

" Hah! EGBERT! he, whom tyrant Rage
" Forc'd from his Country's bleeding Breaſt?
" The Patron of my Orphan Age,
" My Friend, my Warrior ſtands confeſt!

" But why?—The painful Story ſpare,
" That proſtrate Youth, ſaid EGBERT, ſee;
" His Anguiſh aſks a Parent's Care,
" A Parent, once who pitied thee!"

RAYMOND, as one, who glancing round,
Seems from ſome ſudden Trance to ſtart,
Snatch'd the pale Lovers from the Ground,
And held them trembling to his Heart.

Joy, Gratitude, and Wonder ſhed,
United Tears o'er Hymen's Reign,
And Nature her beſt Triumph led,
For Love and Virtue join'd her Train.

THE END.